

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 8

Expressing the sense of Congress on the need for accurate guidelines for breast cancer screening for women ages 40–49, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 16 (legislative day, JANUARY 30), 1995

Ms. SNOWE submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress on the need for accurate guidelines for breast cancer screening for women ages 40–49, and for other purposes.

Whereas the National Cancer Institute is the lead Federal agency for research on the causes, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer;

Whereas health professionals and consumers throughout the Nation regard the guidelines of the National Cancer Institute as reliable scientific and medical advice;

Whereas it has been proven that intervention with routine screening for breast cancer through mammography can save women's lives at a time when medical science is unable to prevent this disease;

Whereas there are statistical limitations to evaluating the efficacy of mammography in a 5–10 year age range of women, using existing studies designed to test the efficacy of mammography in a 25–30 year age range of women;

Whereas there were numerous shortcomings identified in a Canadian study designed to address reduction of mortality from breast cancer in the 40–49 age range;

Whereas to date, it is not possible to have the same degree of scientific confidence about the benefit of mammography for women ages 40–49 as exists for women ages 50–69 due to inherent limitations in the studies that have been conducted;

Whereas meta-analysis (combining the results of several studies) is sometimes useful, and the studies used to reach the National Cancer Institute's conclusions were not easily combined because of variations in design, technology, screening interval, the inclusion or exclusion of clinical breast examination, and quality;

Whereas the existing clinical trial data are inadequate to provide a definite answer to the efficacy of early detection in the 40–49 age group and there has been a dramatic change in technology during the 30-year period since the initiation of the first study of breast cancer screening;

Whereas the majority, approximately 80 percent, of women who are diagnosed with breast cancer have no identifiable risk for this disease;

Whereas breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among women in the age group 15–54;

Whereas the American Cancer Society and 21 other national medical organizations and health and consumer groups

are at variance with the recently rescinded guideline of the National Cancer Institute for mammography for women ages 40–49; and

Whereas the statement of scientific fact on breast cancer screening issued by the National Cancer Institute on December 3, 1993, will cause widespread confusion and concern among women and physicians, erode confidence in mammography, and reinforce barriers and negative attitudes that keep women of all ages from being screened: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) adequately designed and conducted studies
4 are needed to determine the benefit of screening
5 women ages 40–49 through mammography and
6 other emerging technologies;

7 (2) the National Cancer Institute’s statement of
8 scientific fact on breast cancer screening should
9 clearly state that the uncertainty of evidence for
10 women in this age group is due to the limitations of
11 existing studies (as of the date of issuance of the
12 statement); and

13 (3) the National Cancer Institute should reissue
14 the recently rescinded guideline for mammography
15 for women ages 40–49 or direct the public to con-
16 sider guidelines issued by other organizations.

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